seems to be expressly given. And such is the verdict which the best judgment of the world, in all ages, has rendered, by awarding the highest rank to the artist who has kept in due subordination the more sensuous qualities with which material beauty is invested, thereby constituting his representation the clear exponent of that *intention* by which every earnest spirit enjoys the assurance of our spiritual nature, and scorns the subtlety and logic of positive philosophy.

Every experienced artist knows that it is difficult to see nature truly; that for this end long practice is necessary. We see, yet perceive not, and it becomes necessary to cultivate our perception so as to comprehend the essence of the object seen. The poet sees in nature more than mere matter of fact, yet he does not see more than is there, nor what another may not see when *he* points it out. His is only a more perfect exercise of perception, just as the drapery of a fine statue is seen by the common eye, and pronounced beautiful, and the enlightened observer also pronounces it beautiful; but the one ascribes it to the graceful folding, the other to its expression of the figure beneath, but neither sees more nor less in quantity than the other, but with unequal degrees of completeness, in perception. Now, the highest beauty of this drapery consists in the perfection of its disposition, so as to best indicate the beautiful form it clothes, not possessing of itself too much attractiveness, nor lose its value by too strongly defining the figure. And so should we look on external Nature.

Why have the creations of Raphael conferred on him the title of *divine?* Because he saw through the sensuous veil, and embodied the spiritual beauty with which nature is animate, and in whose presence the baser "passions shrink and tremble, and are still." It is a mistake to suppose that Raphael and other earnest minds have added anything of their own to the perfection of their common model. They have only depicted it as they saw it, in its fullness and purity, looking on it with childlike affection and religious reverence, ever watchful that no careless or presumptuous touch should mar its fair proportions. And it is the same with regard to inanimate or animate creation. Childlike affection and religious reverence for the beauty that nature presents before us, form a basis of reliance which the conflicts of opinion can never disturb. Learn first to perceive with truthfulness, and then aim to embody your perceptions; take no thought on the question of genius or of future fame; with these you have nothing to do. Seek not to rival or surpass a brother artist, and above all, let not the love of money overleap the love of Art.

To appreciate Art, cultivation is necessary, but its power may be felt without that, and the feeling will educate itself into the desired appreciation, and derive from it a corresponding degree of pleasure, according to the purity or depravity, the high or low character, of the Art that awakens it. And, as the true and the beautiful are inseparably connected, and the highest beauty with the highest truth, it follows that the most truthful picture must be the most beautiful, according to the nature of its subject. Where is the portrait-painter, having a just sense of his responsibilities, who has not often thrown down his brush in despair, after many fruitless attempts to express the soul that beams at times through the eye of beauty, and so with the yet more mysterious power of lofty intellect? And there is to be seen a corresponding soul and depth of expression in the beauty of landscape nature, which dignifies the Art that embodies it, and improves and elevates the mind that loves to contemplate its pictorial image.

But, suppose we look on a fine landscape simply as a thing of beauty—a source of innocent enjoyment in our leisure moments—a sensuous gratification with the least expenditure of thought or effort of the intellect, how much better is it than many a more expensive toy for which human skill and industry are tasked, and wealth continually lavished! How many of our men of fortune, whom nature and circumstance have well fitted for such enjoyment, surrender, as it were, their birthright, for a mess of pottage, by resorting to costly and needless luxuries, which consume, without satisfying—while Art invites to her feast of beauty, where indulgence never cloys, and entails no penalty of self-reproach!

To the rich merchant and capitalist, and to those whom even a competency has released from the great world-struggle, so far as to allow a little time to rest and reflect in, Landscape Art especially appeals—nor does it appeal in vain. There are some among "the innumerable caravan" that look to it as an oasis in the desert, and there are more who show signs of lively susceptibility to its refreshing influence—those who trace their first enjoyment of existence, in childhood and youth, with all the associations of their minority, to the country, to some pleasant landscape scenery; to such the instinct of nature thus briefly impressed, is seldom or never overcome. Witness the glad return of many an exile to the place of his nativity, and see the beautiful country-seat suddenly rising among the green trees that were young with himself, and almost regarded as playmates. He returns to end his days where they began, and loves to embellish the consecrated spot with filial tenderness, strewing flesh flowers on the grave of long-departed years. To him who preserves the susceptibility to this instinctive impulse, in spite of the discordant clamor and conflict of the crowded city, the true landscape becomes a thing of more than outward beauty, or piece of furniture.

It becomes companionable, holding silent converse with the feelings, playful or pensive—and, at times, touching a chord that vibrates to the inmost recesses of the heart, yet with no unhealthy excitement, but soothing and strengthening to his best faculties. Suppose such an one, on his return home, after the completion of his daily task of drudgery—his dinner partaken, and himself disposed of in his favorite arm-chair, with one or more faithful landscapes before him, and making no greater effort than to look into the picture instead of on it, so as to perceive what it represents; in proportion as it is true and faithful, many a fair vision of forgotten days will animate the canvas, and lead him through the scene: pleasant reminiscences and grateful emotions will spring up at every step, and care and anxiety will retire far behind him. If he possess aught of imaginative tissue, and few such natures are without it, he becomes absorbed in the picture—a gentle breeze fans his forehead, and he hears a distant rumbling; they come not from the canvas, but through the open window casement. No matter, they fall purified on his sensorium, and *that* is far away in the haunts of his boyhood—and that soft wind is chasing the trout stream down the woody glen, beyond which gleams "the deep and silent lake," where the wild deer seeks a fatal refuge. He shifts the scene, and stretching fields and green meadows meet his eye—in such he followed the plough and tossed the new-mown hay; by the road-side stands the school-house, and merry children scatter from its door—such was the place where he first imbibed the knowledge that the world was large and round, while ambition whispered that the village grounds were too narrow for him,—and with the last rays of the setting sun, the picture fades away.

I need scarcely apologize for the seeming sentimentalism of this letter. In this day the sentiment of Art is so overrun by the the *technique*, that it can scarcely be insisted on too strongly. In my next, I shall recur more minutely to the means, rather than the ends, of Art.

Yours truly,

A. B. DURAND.

The Poetry of Architecture; or the Architecture of the Nations of Europe, considered in its Association with Natural Scenery and National Character. By KATA PHUSIN (JOHN RUSKIN).

No. 2.—THE COTTAGE.

1. THE LOWLAND COTTAGE.—ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

Of all embellishments by which the efforts of man can enhance the beauty of natural scenery, those are the most effective which can give animation to the scene, while the spirit which they bestow is in unison with its general character. It is generally desirable to indicate the presence of animated existence in a scene of natural beauty; but only of such existence as shall be imbued with the spirit, and shall partake of the essence, of the beauty, which without it would be dead. If our object, therefore, is to embellish a scene the character of which is peaceful and unpretending, we must not erect a building fit for the abode of wealth or pride. However beautiful or imposing in itself, such an object immediately indicates the presence of a kind of existence unsuited to the scenery which it inhabits; and of a mind which, when it sought retirement, was unacquainted with its own ruling failings, and which consequently excites no sympathy in ours: but, if we erect a dwelling which may appear adapted to the wants, and sufficient for the comfort of a gentle heart and lowly mind, we have instantly attained our object: we have bestowed animation, but we have not disturbed repose. It is for this reason that the cottage is one of the embellishments of natural scenery which deserve attentive consideration. It is beautiful always, and everywhere; whether looking out of the woody dingle with its eye-like window, and sending up the azure smoke between the silver trunks of aged trees; or grouped among the bright corn-fields of the fruitful plain;

or forming grey clusters along the slope of the mountain side, the cottage always gives the idea of a thing to be beloved; a quiet life-giving voice, that is as peaceful as silence itself.

With these feelings, we shall devote some time to the consideration of the prevailing characters, and national peculiarities, of European cottages. The principal thing worthy of observation in the lowland cottage of England is its finished neatness. The thatch is firmly pegged down, and mathematically levelled at the edges; and, though the martin is permitted to attach his humble domicile, in undisturbed security, to the eaves, he may be considered as enhancing the effect of the cottage, by increasing its usefulness, and making it contribute to the comfort of more beings than one. The whitewash is stainless, and its rough surface catches a side light as brightly as a front one: the luxuriant rose is trained gracefully over the window; and the gleaming lattice, divided not into heavy squares, but into small pointed diamonds, is thrown half open, as is just discovered by its glance among the green leaves of the sweet briar, to admit the breeze, that, as it passes over the flowers, becomes full of their fragrance.

The light wooden porch breaks the flat of the cottage face by its projection; and a branch or two of wandering honeysuckle spread over the low thatch. A few square feet of garden, and a latched wicket, persuading the weary and dusty pedestrian, with expressive eloquence, to lean upon it for an instant, and request a drink of water or milk, complete a picture, which, if it be far enough from London to be unspoiled by town sophistications, is a very perfect thing in its way. The ideas it awakens are agreeable; and the architecture is all that we want in such a situation. It is pretty and appropriate; and, if it boasted of any other perfection, it would be at the expense of its propriety.

Let us now cross the Channel, and endeavor to find a country cottage on the other side, if we can; for it is a difficult matter. There are many villages; but such a thing as an isolated cottage is extremely rare. Let us try one or two of the green valleys among the chalk eminences which sweep from Abbeville to Rouen. Here is a cottage at last, and a picturesque one, which is more than we could say for the English domicile. What, then, is the difference? There is a general air of *nonchalance* about the French peasant's habitation, which is aided by a perfect want of everything like neatness; and rendered more conspicuous by some points about the building which have a look of neglected beauty, and obliterated ornament. Half of the whitewash is worn off, and the other half colored by various mosses and wandering lichens, which have been permitted to vegetate upon it, and which, though beautiful, constitute a kind of beauty from which the ideas of age and decay are inseparable. The tall roof of the garret window stands fantastically out; and underneath it, where, in England, we had a plain double lattice, is a deep recess, flatly arched at the top, built of solid masses of grey stone, fluted on the edge; while the brightness of the glass within (if there be any) is lost in shade, causing the recess to appear to the observer like a dark eye. The door has the same character: it is also of stone, which is so much broken and disguised as to prevent it from giving any idea of strength or stability. The entrance is always open: no roses, or anything else, are wreathed about it; several outhouses, built in the same style, give the building extent; and the group (in all probability, the dependency of some large old chateau in the distance) does not peep out of copse, or thicket, or a group of tall and beautiful trees, but stands comfortlessly between two individuals of the column of long-trunked fac-simile elms, which keep guard along the length of the public road.

Now let it be observed how perfectly, how singularly, the distinctive characters of these two cottages agree with those of the countries in which they are built, and of the people for whose use they are constructed. England is a country whose every scene is in miniature. Its green valleys are not wide; its dewy hills are not high; its forests are of no extent, or rather it has nothing that can pretend to a more sounding title than that of "wood." Its champaigns are minutely chequered into fields; we never can see far at a time; and there is a sense of something inexpressible, except by the truly English word, "snug," in every quiet nook and sheltered lane. The English cottage, therefore, is equally small, equally sheltered, equally invisible at a distance. But France is a country on a large scale. Low, but long, hills sweep away for miles into vast uninterrupted champaigns; immense forests shadow the country for hundreds of square miles, without once letting through the light of day; its pastures and arable land are divided on the same scale; there are no fences; we can hardly place ourselves in any spot where we shall not see for leagues around, and there is a kind of comfortless sublimity in the size of every scene. The French cottage, therefore, is on the same scale, equally large and desolate-looking; but we shall see presently that it can arouse feelings which, though they cannot be said to give it sublimity, yet are of a higher order than any which can be awakened at the sight of the English cottage. Again, every bit of cultivated ground in England has a finished neatness; the fields are all divided by hedges or fences, the fruit trees are neatly pruned, the roads beautifully made, &c. Everything is the reverse in France; the fields are distinguished by the nature of the crops they bear; the fruit-trees are overgrown with moss and misletoe, and the roads immeasurably wide and miserably made.

So much for the character of the two cottages, as they assimilate with the countries in which they are found. Let us now see how they assimilate with the character of the people by whom they are built. England is a country of perpetually increasing prosperity and active enterprise; but for that very reason nothing is allowed to remain till it gets old. Large old trees are cut down for timber; old houses are pulled down for the materials, and old furniture is laughed at and neglected. Everything is perpetually altered and renewed by the activity of invention and improvement. The cottage, consequently, has no dilapidated look about it; it is never suffered to get old; it is used as long as it is comfortable, and then taken down and rebuilt; for it was originally raised in a style incapable of resisting the ravages of time. But, in France there prevail two opposite feelings, both in the extreme; that of the old pedigreed population, which preserves unlimitedly, and that of the modern revolutionists, which destroys unmercifully. Every object has partly the appearance of having been preserved with infinite care from an indefinite age, and partly exhibits the evidence of recent ill treatment and disfiguration. Primeval forests rear their vast trunks over those of many younger generations growing up beside them; the chateau or the palace, showing, by its style of architecture, its venerable age, bears the marks of the cannon ball, and from neglect is withering into desolation.

Little is renewed: there is little spirit of improvement; and the customs which prevailed centuries ago are still taught by the patriarchs of the families to their grand-children. The French cottage, therefore, is just such as we should have expected from the disposition of its inhabitants: its massive windows, its broken ornaments, its whole air and appearance, all tell the same tale of venerable age, respected and preserved, till at last its dilapidation wears an appearance of neglect. Again, the Englishman will sacrifice everything to comfort, and will not only take great pains to secure it, but he has generally also the power of doing so; for the English peasant is, on the average, wealthier than the French. The French peasant has no idea of comfort, and, therefore, makes no effort to secure it. This difference in the character of their inhabitants is, as we have seen, written on the fronts of the respective cottages. The Englishman is also fond of display; but the ornaments, exterior and interior, with which he adorns his dwelling, however small it may be, are either to show the extent of his possessions, or to contribute to some personal profit or gratification: they never seem designed for the sake of ornament alone. Thus, his wife's love of display is shown by the rows of useless crockery in her cupboard; and his own by the rose-tree at the front door, from which he may obtain an early bud to stick in the button-hole of his best blue coat on Sundays; the honeysuckle is cultivated for its smell, the garden for its cabbages. Not so in France. There the meanest peasant, with an equal or greater love of display, embellishes his dwelling as much as lies in his power, solely for the gratification of his feeling of what is agreeable to the eye. The gable of his roof is prettily shaped; the niche at its corner is richly carved; the wooden beams, if there be any, are fashioned into grotesque figures; and even the "*air négligé*" and general dilapidations of the building tell a thousand times more agreeably to an eye accustomed to the picturesque, than the spruce preservation of the English cottage. No building which we feel to excite a sentiment of mere complacency can be said to be in good taste. On the contrary, when the building is of such a class, that it can neither astonish by its beauty, nor impress by its sublimity, and when it is likewise placed in a situation so uninteresting as to render something more than mere fitness or propriety necessary, and to compel the eye to expect something from the building itself, a gentle contrast of feeling in that building is exceedingly desirable; and, if possible, a

sense that something has passed away, the presence of which would have bestowed a deeper interest on the whole scene. The fancy will immediately try to recover this, and, in the endeavor, will obtain the desired effect from an indefinite cause.

Now, the French cottage cannot please by its propriety, for it can only be adapted to the ugliness around; and, as it ought to be, and cannot but be, adapted to this, it is still less able to please by its beauty. How, then, can it please? There is no pretence to gaiety in its appearance, no green flower-pots in ornamental lattices; but the substantial style of any ornaments it may possess, the recessed windows, the stone carvings, and the general size of the whole, unite to produce an impression of the building having once been fit for the residence of prouder inhabitants; of its having once possessed strength, which is now withered, and beauty, which is now faded. This sense of something lost; something which has been, and is not, is precisely what is wanted. The imagination is set actively to work in an instant; and we are made aware of the presence of a beauty, the more pleasing because visionary; and, while the eye is pitying the actual humility of the present building, the mind is admiring the imagined pride of the past. Every mark of dilapidation increases this feeling; while these very marks (the fractures of the stone, the lichens of the mouldering wall, and the graceful lines of the sinking roof) are all delightful in themselves. Thus, we have shown that, while the English cottage is pretty from its propriety, the French cottage, having the same connection with its climate, country, and people, produces such a contrast of feeling as bestows on it a beauty addressing itself to the mind, and is therefore in perfectly good taste. If we are asked why, in this instance, good taste produces only what every traveller feels to be not in the least striking, we reply that, where the surrounding circumstances are unfavorable, the very adaptation to them which we have declared to be necessary, renders the building uninteresting; and that, in the next paper, we shall see a very different result from the operations of equally good taste in adapting a cottage to its situation, in one of the noblest districts of Europe. Our subject will be, the Lowland Cottage of North Italy.

Oxford, Sept., 1837.

PICTURE-BUYING.

A PARAGRAPH recently appeared among the telegraphic dispatches of the New York press, to the effect that a collection of master-pieces by Murillo, Correggio, and other famous painters had been exhibited in Washington, to the delight of all amateurs, preparatory to their approaching sale. Not having seen this collection, which has thus enjoyed the advantage of grand puff by telegraph, we cannot speak positively concerning its merits; but if the pictures are genuine, the proprietor makes a serious mistake in selling them in this country. Works by Murillo and Correggio are very rare and immensely valuable. In Europe, where every one of them is known, they bring fabulous prices. Not long ago a Murillo was sold at auction at Paris for some $120,000, and there are Correggios which would fetch quite as much. We do not mean that all the pictures of these artists bear so high a market value, but that they are worth prices there which few persons in this country would think of paying. Accordingly, the fact that this Washington collection is retained here instead of being sent to France or England for sale, is a proof either that the owner does not believe the pictures to be genuine, or is ignorant how to sell them to the best advantage.

There is probably no country in the world where the want of critical taste in pictures is accompanied to such an extent by credulity as to their worth and disposition to buy them. A gentleman who could not be taken in by a horse-jockey, and who would not even buy a pig in a poke, will yet suffer himself to be cheated by a picture-vender, and, what is more, will exhibit the fraud with complacency as an evidence of his singular good fortune. Probably there are in the country, apart from this lot at Washington, ten thousand works of the old masters, Raphaels, Murillos, Claudes, Salvators, Titians, Correggios, or what not, every one of whose possessors procured that wonderful picture, by a lucky chance, from somebody who had bought it without its origin being known, and had been compelled to smuggle it out of Italy or Spain in order to get off with his prize. In this way it is safe to affirm that there is not another land under the sun which contains so many worthless, smoky, and dirty old daubs as this, nor another that offers so good a market to the busy manufacturers of such impostures. The supplying of the United States with pictures by the old masters is, accordingly, an important branch of European industry.

To a great extent all this is based not only on ignorance, but on a superstitious notion that the old masters painted a great deal better than any living artists. Mr. Crœsus goes to Europe, determined to adorn his mansion with finer pictures than his neighbors have to boast of. He falls in with some swindler, who has a remarkable little collection of great old works hitherto unknown to connoisseurs, and becomes their fortunate possessor; or some ignoramus of an American Consul or Minister, aids him in the purchase of a lot of wretched caricatures, or copies (including Guido's Beatrice Cenci, of course, though no copy has been allowed to be made from the original for these twenty-five years), and, in due time, the abode of Crœsus becomes more absurd, in the eye of true taste, than it was before. Had Crœsus only been aware that it takes the keenest judgment and the minutest technical knowledge to determine that a picture was really painted by an old master, and that these artists were, after all, no better than others now living, nor, in many respects, as good—he might have avoided making a butt of himself in that particular manner. Let it once be understood, not only that all good works of the old painters are catalogued and unattainable, but there are living artists whose names may be matched with any of former times, and even the Crœsuses will, at last, learn better than be cheated by counterfeiters, who make a business of covering canvases with smoke and dirt, and calling them Correggios, Murillos, and the like.

Mr. Ruskin has lately issued a bull against the spending of money for engravings. It is much better, he tells us, to possess even the smallest water color drawing, than the finest print, since the former must needs contain some original feeling, while the latter is but a mechanical copy; it is also better to devote the same means to encouraging native art. No doubt there is truth in this; but on the other hand, it is true that most of us can never see the immortal works of Europe except in engravings; and that if these convey no adequate idea of their originals, they do afford us a knowledge of their composition and drawing which is better had so than not at all. At least the prints are genuine, and you may show them to your friend for what they pretend to be, without a lurking consciousness that he is pitying the mistake of the deluded owner. Besides, prints are valuable from their cheapness, and capacity of being multiplied to a degree impossible to original works. The traveller in a secluded region, whose eye is refreshed, as he enters a house, by a fine engraving after an old or modern master, will not complain because it is not a painting by Page or Leutze. It is well to have original pictures if one can afford it; but this should not deny to those who cannot, the refining and beautiful influence of good engravings.

We hear of a money-spending person of this city who proposes to adorn his very costly house with twenty pictures, at a thousand dollars each, to be painted by the first Italian artists. We do not vouch for the truth of this rumor, but quote it only as showing anew that wealth does not insure knowledge on all subjects. There are no Italian artists now living whose works are worth buying—certainly none to be compared with the French, Germans, English, or Americans. Equally foolish is the practice of some other rich people who order so many pictures of their upholsterer, or looking-glass maker—just as they would order home their marketing from the huckster. It is rather melancholy to think of the sums of money wasted in thus buying pictures, which might be employed in the encouragement of genuine Art; and though we do not pretend to furnish a manual for picture-buyers, we will suggest one or two rules, which those who are not themselves connoisseurs, may observe with advantage:

1. Always prefer a modern to an old picture.
2. Never buy an old picture which pretends to bear a distinguished name, for you will certainly be cheated.
3. Never buy copies of old pictures, unless you know the artist who makes the copy, and know that he is not a fifth-rate bungler.
4. Have one good picture rather than many poor ones.
5. There are excellent artists in your own country; buy of them instead of going abroad and faring worse.
6. If you have ever been deluded into making great bargains in Titians, Vandykes, Claudes, or any other old masters' works, burn them up at once if you can afford it; if not, send them to auction to be sold for what they really are, and for what they will bring.

By following these simple suggestions, Mr. Crœsus may fill his picture gallery, or furnish his new up-town house with more real success than he has otherwise a right to promise himself.

The above common-sense article from the *Tribune*, will probably have met the eyes of many of our readers before, but it deserves more than simple reading, and being forgotten, as newspaper articles generally are.

It is undoubtedly a fact that we have many "patrons" of the Fine Arts in this country, but, most unhappily for the interests of those Arts, they are men who generally operate more from personal pride than from any genuine sympathy for Art. They are fond of buying pictures, but, unfortunately, have not the capacity to tell the difference between a good and a bad one, and so take refuge in the inaccessibility of old-masterdom. Now, to be an appreciative admirer of the old masters, implies a consummate attainment in the intellectual study of Art, which we have never known any but a practical artist to attain to. The qualities which now make the works so